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New Era in Intelligence

Spying Became an Electronic Art During Dulles's Career in Field

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Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27 — intelligence collection was already under way. For more than three thousand years after Joshua sent his spies into Jericho, the techniques of intelligence gathering remained essentially unchanged. Then the scientific revolution, and particularly the progress of electronics, opened revolutionary new possibilities in the arts of espionage.

It is one of the distinctions of Allen Welsh Dulles that his career bridges these two eras of intelligence activity. That is why his impending resignation from the directorship of the Central Intelligence Agency, which was announced today, is something of a landmark in the history of intelligence.

When Joshua's two agents returned to him from Jericho, they were able to report that the morale of the defenders was shaky, "for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."

This person-to-person, word-of-mouth intelligence was still the basic mode of operation when Mr. Dulles became this country's chief intelligence agent in Switzerland in World War II.

It was to him that German informants came in 1944 with word of the plot, by highly placed anti-Nazis to assassinate Hitler. And again, the following year, the German military came to him with the assurance that the German Army in Italy was ready to surrender.

But when Mr. Dulles became the director of the C. I. A. in 1953, the new scientific era was

"It is imperative that we find new ways to gather information in areas of the world which our agents and informers cannot hope to penetrate. I want you to produce a space satellite that will send back pictures and other data which will tell me whether armor is moving on the roads behind the Iron Curtain and whether nuclear devices are being tested in outer space or even underground."

Occasionally the public gets a hint of what goes on in this new, impersonal kind of espionage, as when the United States Government announces that a nuclear device has been exploded that day in the desolate reaches of Siberia.

For the last eight years Mr. Dulles has presided over this kind of scientific spy work as well as over the continuing classical methods of gathering information that other governments would prefer to keep secret.

In his personal style of operations, he has startled some old hands in the game by defying the ancient tradition that the chief spy, as his agents, should court anonymity.

Daniel Defoe, who is sometimes called the founder of the modern British intelligence organization, operated under the "cover" of his reputation as a writer.

This tradition of secrecy was so strong that as late as World

War II the chief of British intelligence was known only as "The Brigadier." His real name, Menzies, was not even mentioned at Cabinet meetings.

Mr. Dulles decided from the moment he became director of the C. I. A. that this kind of secrecy was not possible in the United States. Accordingly, he made public speeches, received newspapermen in his office and at his home, and traveled abroad without concealment.

To the dismay of some of his associates, he decided that his Washington staff of many thousands, which was scattered in innumerable buildings, should be housed in one mammoth headquarters located in plain view on a four-lane highway.

"Never try to conceal what cannot or need not be concealed," he told his critics. "When I was in Switzerland during the war, nobody knew who was the British intelligence agent but every one knew who was there for the United States. That was why certain information about what was going on in the enemy countries came to me."

Keeps Tight Security

But although he has not shunned personal publicity, Mr. Dulles has maintained the tightest kind of security at the C. I. A.

This has made it impossible for outsiders to evaluate his own performance as an intelligence chief and that of his agency.

Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, one of the most influential Democrats in Congress, tried repeatedly to have a Congressional committee established to keep watch over the C. I. A. Mr. Dulles vetoed all his political will, which is sometimes put second only to that of a football coach, to frustrate the attempt.

Officials of the State Department have often said privately that the only way Mr. Dulles set his own diplomatic service was to make for-

Members of Congress have

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